

JENNIFER KNIGHT

Year of call: 1996



Overview

Jennifer Knight specialises in serious, complex crime. Her practice has an emphasis on historic, multi-complainant sexual offences and in recent years she has led in several substantial, high-profile trials. Jennifer has developed particular expertise in cases involving non-accidental injuries to babies and children and she has recently advised on and successfully prosecuted several cases of causing or allowing the death of, or serious injury of a child. Jennifer has considerable experience in cases of misconduct in public office and recently led in a series of cases arising from a Panorama investigation at Medway Secure Training Centre. She is also experienced in homicide of all kinds, both as a leader and junior. Jennifer frequently advises the CPS from an early stage in cases of complexity or sensitivity, recently in respect of a doctor who assaulted patients under the guise of medical examination.

Areas of Expertise

- Homicide & related offences
- Sexual offences
- Misconduct in public office
- Private prosecution

Homicide and related offences

Jennifer has recently been instructed in several murders including R v Knight, Knight and Knight [2015], in which the victim died 10 days after the defendants had entered guilty pleas to GBH with intent. Unusual, legally complex issues arose when all three applied to vacate their pleas when charged with murder.

Jennifer has considerable experience in cases involving non-accidental injury, most recently in R v Shepherd & Cox [2017] and R v Smyth & Osborne [2018] in which Jennifer led successful prosecutions for causing or allowing death and serious injury of a child. Jennifer has become expert in understanding both the legal issues and the highly complex medical evidence surrounding this relatively unusual area of law. Her advice is often sought by the CPS prior to charge and in R v Simpson and Smith [2018] led to a prosecution being brought that was ultimately successful.

Sexual Offences

Jennifer has vast experience in cases involving every type of serious sexual offending.

She is skilled in managing the issues that arise in historic and multi-complainant cases, most recently in R v Soper [2017] in which the former Abbott of Ealing Abbey was tried for rape and other sexual offences committed in the '70s against pupils at St Benedict's School. In this case Jennifer worked with a team to manage a substantial disclosure exercise arising from previous trials and enquiries eg The Carlisle Report.

In R v Koroma & Ngasa [2016]. Jennifer led a successful, high-profile prosecution for child sexual exploitation in respect of 13 school-age complainants.

In R v Jones and others [2015] Jennifer led in the multi-handed gang rape of vulnerable victim over 4 days. During the trial Jennifer successfully appealed the Judge's ruling of no case to answer in respect of 1 defendant as a Terminatory Ruling.

Having worked successfully with young and vulnerable witnesses over many years, Jennifer is a contributor to The Advocate's Gateway Toolkits. In R v Hearn [2017] Jennifer cross-examined a defendant charged with rape, who was severely deaf and used a combination of lip-reading and hearing aids. She tailored her approach to the defendant's communication needs, standing close to him and enunciating slowly and

clearly to assist lip-reading and using expression and gesture for emphasis. She was congratulated by the intermediary for her effective approach.

Jennifer has experience of cases involving cyber-crime, recently in R v Harrad [2017] in which the 47-year-old defendant posed as a teenage boy online, inciting the 13-year-old complainant to send him explicit images of herself which he later used to blackmail her.

Jennifer has provided advice prior to charge in many cases of particular complexity. She is experienced in drafting complex, multi-count indictments, most recently in R v Shah [2018] in charging a doctor with 118 counts of sexual offending against a large number of his patients.

Jennifer has great experience in cases where concurrent proceedings give rise to the need to seek disclosure of material from the family court and has made several successful applications in the High Court Family Division.

Misconduct in Public Office

Jennifer was instructed in R v D and others [2018] in which she led in a high-profile 9-week trial arising from undercover investigation conducted by Panorama at Medway Secure Training Centre. 4 prison officers were charged with Misconduct in Public Office. In R v Burgess [2017] Jennifer successfully prosecuted a police officer who had inveigled his way into sexual relations with the teenage daughters of families he met as a liaison officer.

Private prosecution

Jennifer has experience of conducting private prosecutions having been instructed for several years by the RSPCA.